

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) A connector assembly for positioning a lead within an implantable medical device, comprising:

a housing having a header forming a lumen for receiving the lead, the lumen defining a mating surface and having an internal diameter larger than the lead to be connected therein; and

a collar slidably engageable with the lead,

wherein the collar is capable of being slideably inserted within the lumen and is releasably securable to the mating surface of the header to fixedly position the lead within the lumen; and

wherein at least one of the mating surface and the collar are formed of a compressible material.

2. Cancelled

3. (Currently amended) The connector assembly according to claim 2 1, wherein the collar is formed of a compressible material such that releasably securing at least a portion of the collar into the header compresses at least said portion of the collar onto the lead to thereby retain the lead in the lumen.

4. (Original) The connector assembly according to claim 1, wherein a portion of the collar has a tapered surface for insertion into the header lumen.

5. (Original) The connector assembly according to claim 1, wherein the header has threads for threadably engaging the collar.

6. (Original) The connector assembly according to claim 1, wherein the lead is substantially isodiametric.

7. (Original) The connector assembly according to claim 1, further comprising a sleeve for insertion into the header lumen.

8. (Original) The connector assembly according to claim 7, wherein the sleeve has threads for threadably engaging the collar.

9. (Original) The connector assembly according to claim 7, wherein the sleeve is formed of a compressible material.

10. (Original) The connector assembly according to claim 1, wherein the collar comprises a tapered section and a locking ring.

11. (Original) The connector assembly according to claim 10, wherein the locking ring is threaded.

12. (Original) The connector assembly according to claim 11, wherein the locking ring includes an annular recess, and wherein the threads are provided on the annular recess.

13. (Original) The connector assembly according to claim 12, wherein the threads are inwardly-directed.

14. (Original) The connector assembly according to claim 1, wherein the header includes at least one clamp extending substantially around the lumen.

15. (Original) The connector assembly according to claim 14, wherein the clamp forms an electrical connection with the lead when the lead is inserted in the header.

16. (Original) The connector assembly according to claim 1, wherein the collar includes an O-ring.

17. (Original) The connector assembly according to claim 7, further comprising an engaging mechanism to engage the collar, the engaging mechanism including a handle and a head connected to the handle by a shank, the head having projections for engaging indentations positioned along the collar to rotate the collar into engagement with the sleeve, and forming an aperture for passage of the lead therethrough.

18. (Original) The connector assembly according to claim 17, wherein the projections are equiangularly spaced along the head.

19. (Original) The connector assembly according to claim 17, further comprising means for signaling positive engagement of the collar with the sleeve.

20. (Original) The connector assembly according to claim 19, wherein the means for signaling the positive engagement of the collar with the sleeve is at least one of a detent, an audible signal, and corresponding visual markings on the sleeve and the collar.

~~20~~ 21. (Currently amended) An implantable medical device, comprising:
a housing having a header forming a lumen for receiving a lead, the lumen defining a mating surface and having an internal diameter larger than the lead to be connected therein; and
a collar slidably engageable with the lead,
wherein at least a portion of the collar is slidable into the header lumen,
and at least a portion of the collar is releasably securable to the header such that the lead is retained in the lumen, and

wherein at least one of the mating surface and the collar are formed of a compressible material.

~~21~~22. (Currently amended) The implantable medical device according to claim ~~20~~21, wherein a portion of the collar has a tapered surface for insertion into the header lumen.

~~22~~23. (Currently amended) The implantable medical device according to claim ~~20~~21, wherein the header has threads for threadably engaging the collar.

~~23~~24. (Currently amended) The implantable medical device according to claim ~~4~~21, further comprising a sleeve for insertion into the header lumen.

~~24~~25. (Currently amended) The implantable medical device according to claim ~~23~~24, wherein the sleeve has threads for threadably engaging the collar.

~~25~~26. (Currently amended) The implantable medical device according to claim ~~20~~21, wherein the collar comprises a tapered section and a locking ring.

~~26~~27. (Currently amended) The implantable medical device according to claim ~~25~~26, wherein the locking ring is threaded.

~~27~~28. (Currently amended) The implantable medical device according to claim ~~26~~27, wherein the locking ring includes an annular recess, and wherein the threads are provided on the annular recess.

~~27~~29. (Currently Amended) The implantable medical device according to claim ~~20~~21, wherein the collar includes an O-ring.

~~28~~30. (Currently amended)The implantable medical device according to claim ~~23~~24, further comprising an engaging mechanism to engage the collar, the engaging mechanism including a handle and a head connected to the handle by a shank, the head having projections for engaging indentations positioned along the collar to rotate the collar into engagement with the sleeve, and forming an aperture for passage of the lead therethrough.

~~29~~31. (Currently amended)The implantable medical device according to claim ~~28~~30, wherein the projections are equiangularly spaced along the head.

~~30~~32. (Currently amended)The implantable medical device according to claim ~~28~~30, further comprising means for signaling positive engagement of the collar with the sleeve.

~~31~~33. (Currently amended)The implantable medical device according to claim ~~30~~32, wherein the means for signaling the positive engagement of the collar with the sleeve is at least one of a detent, an audible signal, and corresponding visual markings on the sleeve and the collar.